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The European Security Continuum and the EU as an International Security Provider¹

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Abstract

The European Union has long been seen as a distinctive or sui generis actor in international politics, epitomised by the notions of civilian or normative power, or more recently, by the 'Comprehensive Approach'. However, these conceptualisations of the EU as a distinctive international security provider are being challenged by the blurring of the traditional internal-external security divide. The threats and challenges identified in the various EU security strategies increasingly transcend geographic and bureaucratic boundaries, creating a European security continuum, which complicates the conceptualisation and operationalization of the EU as a security provider. Significant friction continues to exist in the formulation and implementation of security policy as EU institutions and capabilities struggle to overcome the traditional architecture separating internal and external security. In parallel the cross fertilization of internal and external security norms and practices undermines understandings of the EU's role as a normative international security provider.

Keywords

EU, security, internal-external, normative power

INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) has long been seen as a distinctive or *sui generis* actor in international politics, epitomised by the plethora of conceptualisations of EU power, including: civilian, normative, transformative, post-modern, ethical, smart and soft. What many of these conceptualisations have in common is that the EU is perceived (rightly or wrongly) as focusing more on ‘milieu goals’ rather than ‘possession goals’² with generally more (although not entirely) benign motivations. More recently the EU’s distinctiveness as an international security provider has been more pragmatically couched in the language of the ‘Comprehensive Approach’, whereby the EU seeks to address security challenges holistically; something NATO cannot do, being primarily a military organisation, and other international organisations, such as the United Nations, are struggling with. However, these conceptualisations of the EU as a distinctive international security provider are being challenged by the evolving security environment. In particular, over the last 15 years there has been a significant trend within EU security strategies towards the blurring of internal and external security. This increasing focus on the interconnections between internal and external security threats suggests the emergence of a European security continuum where geographic (domestic and foreign) and/or bureaucratic (civilian and military) distinctions begin to erode.

This is particularly pertinent as the EU’s two overarching security policies, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)³ and the Area of Freedom Security and Justice (AFSJ), increasingly transcend the internal-external divide, with AFSJ operating inside and outside the EU and CSDP drawing on both civilian and military instruments. The central proposition of the article is that the internal-external divide is being undermined in three ways, (a) the changing nature of the threats (b) changing threat perceptions, and (c) the EU’s responses. However, not all security challenges blur these boundaries to the same degree or in the same ways: some (such as organised crime) may transcend geographic boundaries; some (such as state failure) may transcend bureaucratic boundaries; others (such as terrorism) may transcend both; while a few (such as interstate conflict) may transcend neither. Hence, this security continuum can act as a framework to assess the nature of the security threats identified by the EU and its’ responses to those threats in terms of a dual blurring of the geographic (domestic-foreign) and bureaucratic (civilian-military) dimensions of security. At

² Wolfers, Arnold, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays in International Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962)

³ CSDP was called ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) until the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in December 2009, for the sake of consistency CSDP will be used throughout this article.

one end of the continuum are the transboundary⁴ challenges where geographic and bureaucratic divides are increasingly irrelevant. At the other end challenges are still demarcated by both geographic and bureaucratic division. While this trend is not new, the prominence of claims about an internal-external security nexus has increased significantly with implications for the EU as an international security provider. As Kirchner has argued: 'the extent to which the EU can be deemed a security provider depends considerably on the definition of security or, more precisely, on the type of security threat that is envisaged.'⁵

This emerging European security continuum creates both a practical and normative challenge for the EU as an international security provider. First, it creates significant challenges for the EU's institutional architecture and capability profile, which are mired in bureaucratic turf wars and struggling to overcome the legacy of the EU's pillar structure. Second, the EU's responses to the increasing interconnections between internal and external security problematizes perceptions of the EU as a distinctive normative⁶ or civilian power⁷ pursuing 'milieu goals'. These conceptualisations construct the EU as a security provider seeking to act as an exemplar and a 'force for good' in the international system based on promoting shared norms and values such as liberty, democracy, rule of law and human rights, utilising different capabilities and being driven by more benign motivations, which focus on goals that others, indeed all, can benefit from (milieu goals) rather than pursuing goals that benefit only itself (possession goals). As the security agenda widens and the EU's responses tend toward protecting its own interests first, coercively if necessary, its distinctiveness begins to erode. Yet, the emerging security continuum also provides an opportunity for the EU to reframe and reassert its distinctiveness as an international security provider, through making a reality of the Comprehensive Approach (CA) by drawing holistically on the full spectrum of instruments at its disposal, while limiting the shift away from pursuing milieu goals.

The guiding question the article addresses is: in what ways does the EU's security discourse challenge the traditional internal-external security divide and what are the practical and normative implications for the EU as an international security provider? It argues that the current institutional

⁴ See: Boin, A and Rhinard, M. (2008) 'Managing Transboundary Crises: What role for the European Union.' *International Studies Review* 10(1): 1-26

⁵ Kirchner, Emil, 'The Challenge of European Union Security Governance', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (2006), p. 952

⁶ Manners, Ian 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2002), p. 235-258

⁷ Duchêne, Francois, 'Europe's role in World Peace', in Richard Mayne (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow Sixteen European's Look Ahead* (London: Fontana, 1972)

and capability framework is limiting the CA's success, while the EU's responses to the blurring of internal and external security undermine its distinctiveness as a normative international security provider. The article structures this analysis and argument in three parts. First, it examines the EU's framing of security, with a particular focus on its discourse on the blurring of the internal-external divide, because the type of security threat will influence the nature of the EU as a security provider. This discourse is made up of the EU's security strategies and policies, which are analysed to identify when, why and how the blurring of internal and external security is invoked. Second, the article draws out the practical implications of this discursive framing for EU security practices. In doing so it examines the institutional and capability opportunities and obstacles created by the emerging European security continuum. Finally, the article analyses the conceptual and normative consequences of these changing discourses and practices of security for understandings of the EU as an international security provider.

FRAMING SECURITY: THE EU'S INTERNAL-EXTERNAL DISCOURSE

Following the launch in 1999 of CSDP and AFSJ there has been a clear discursive trend across EU security strategies to make explicit the increasing connections between internal and external security and, therefore, the need to improve coordination between internal and external security institutions. For example, the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) argued that 'The post-Cold War environment is one of increasingly open borders in which internal and external aspects of security are indissolubly linked'⁸, while the 2009 Stockholm Programme went as far as claiming that 'internal and external security are inseparable.'⁹ More specifically, the ESS, the 2008 ESS Implementation Report, the 2010 Internal Security Strategy (ISS) and the Commission's ISS in Action, identify an ever expanding range of challenges: terrorism, cybercrime, cybersecurity, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), illegal migration, energy security, organised crime, state failure, environmental change, regional conflict, natural and man-made disasters and border security. As the number and complexity of security challenges increased, so did references to the increasing linkages between internal and external security. As Catherine Ashton, the former High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), argued: 'we know that internal and external challenges are interconnected. Take illegal immigration or terrorism. Neither is

⁸ Council of the EU, *A Secure Europe in a Better World, European Security Strategy*, (Brussels, 12 December 2003), p. 2

⁹ Council of the EU, *The Stockholm Programme – An Open and Secure Europe Serving and Protecting the Citizens* (Brussels, 2 December 2009), p.73

purely an internal or external issue.’¹⁰ Yet, this discursive construction of an emerging security continuum is barely reflected in the implementation of the ESS or ISS.

This is partly because the ESS and ISS, while providing overarching frameworks within which the EU and its member states identify common security threats and challenges, are two quite distinct strategies.¹¹ First, they were drafted very differently. The ESS was quickly drawn up within the office of Javier Solana, then High Representative for CFSP. The ISS had a much longer gestation period, being promoted by the Commission, Council and EU Presidencies over several years before being adopted under the Spanish Presidency in February 2010. Second, the strategies differ in their recommendations for action. The ESS and its 2008 Implementation Report are quite vague in their policy proposals. The ISS and, in particular, the Commission’s ISS in Action make much more specific recommendations for tackling the challenges identified. Third, the strategies had different rationales. The ESS was about rebuilding commonality on international security issues in the wake of the 2003 Iraq war, while the ISS was about improving coordination, policy and action through the development of a ‘European security model’.

Yet despite these differences, the ESS and ISS display some strikingly similar characteristics. Two are particularly relevant to the emerging European security continuum: (a) claims that internal and external security are inseparable; and (b) the threats identified. First, both strategies explicitly claim that the internal-external divide is eroding. The ESS argues we live in a world of ‘increasingly open borders in which the internal and external aspects of security are indissolubly linked’¹², emphasising the geographic blurring of security challenges. The strategy continues, ‘none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means’¹³, suggesting the bureaucratic distinction between military and civilian security is becoming less clear cut. The dual blurring discourse is continued in the 2008 ESS Implementation Report, which emphasises the EU’s desire to ‘improve the way in which we bring together internal and external dimensions’ of security.¹⁴ Specifically, it calls for the ‘coherent use of our instruments, including political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, crisis response, economic and trade cooperation, and civilian and

¹⁰ Council of the EU, *Remarks by HR Catherine Ashton at Munich Security Conference* (Brussels, 6 February 2010)

¹¹ There is a long standing debate as to whether the ESS is actually a strategy. For example see: Toje, Asle ‘The 2003 European Union Security Strategy: A Critical Appraisal’, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol 10, No. 1, (2005) pp. 117-133 Biscop, Sven & Andersson, Joel (eds.), *The EU and the European Security Strategy: Forging a Global Europe* (London: Routledge, 2007)

¹² Council of the EU, *A Secure Europe in a Better*, op. cit., p. 1

¹³ Ibid., p. 7

¹⁴ Council of the EU, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy – Providing Security in a Changing World* (Brussels, 11 December, 2008), p. 4

military crisis management.’¹⁵ However, these calls refer primarily to EU policies and missions overseas, not yet signifying bureaucratic linkages with the EU’s internal security structures.

Nevertheless, the ISS discourse explicitly makes a case for ‘a greater interdependence between internal and external security’ stressing that internal security ‘must be understood as a wide and comprehensive concept which straddles multiple sectors.’¹⁶ The ISS devotes an entire section to the external dimension of internal security, claiming ‘a concept of internal security cannot exist without an external dimension, since internal security increasingly depends to a large extent on external security,’¹⁷ signifying a geographic merging of security. The strategy, therefore, calls for greater cooperation between Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and CSDP through the ‘participation of law enforcement agencies and Justice Freedom and security bodies at all stages of civil crisis management,’¹⁸ suggesting a bureaucratic blurring of security. This discursive framing is consolidated in the Commission’s ISS in Action, which clearly argues for a dual blurring of security claiming that ‘many of today’s security challenges are cross-border and cross-sectoral in nature.’¹⁹ It continues, ‘in striving to reach our security objectives, the contribution from both EU internal and external policies is crucial.’²⁰ To do so, it is ‘important to ensure coherence and complementarity between internal and external aspects of EU security.’²¹ The ISS also identifies institutions associated with external security as crucial to tackling some key internal challenges. For example, to implement the ISS the Commission calls for the European External Action Service (EEAS) to ‘be invited to participate to ensure consistency with the wider European Security Strategy and to exploit synergies between internal and external policies, including risk and threat assessments.’²² The Commission’s communication also calls for the linking of the different situation awareness centres across the EU to better coordinate responses to crises and disasters, and the use of maritime surveillance capabilities to enhance border management. However, as with the ESS and as explored later, these calls for enhanced linkages between the EU’s internal and external security institutions remain largely rhetorical, with little progress in bringing together internal and external security institutions more systematically. Nevertheless, the ESS and ISS demonstrate how the EU is

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 9

¹⁶ Council of the EU, *Draft Internal Security Strategy for the European Union: “Towards a European Security Model”* (Brussels, 8 March 2010) p. 2, 5

¹⁷ Council of the EU, *Draft Internal Security Strategy*, op. cit., p. 16-17

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 17

¹⁹ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and Council. The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five Steps towards a more secure Europe* (Brussels, 22 November 2010), p. 2

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., p. 3

²² Ibid., p. 15

discursively constructing a European security continuum through a dual (geographic and bureaucratic) blurring of security. This blurring may lead to the cross fertilisation of internal and external security norms and practices, which may undermine the EU's normative security provider self-image.

This blurring is supported by the second striking commonality of these two security strategies; overlapping threats and challenges, despite the strategies' different orientations. The ESS is externally orientated, seeking to identify the threats and challenges within the international system which are likely to affect the security of the EU, its member states, and its citizens. Meanwhile the ISS is directed at the challenges to citizen's security originating from within the EU. Yet a number of security challenges appear in both strategies, including: terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, arms trafficking, cybercrime and cybersecurity, energy security, neighbourhood and border security, and resilience to accidents and disasters whether natural or man-made. While the ISS and Commission's communication may emphasise different aspects of a particular security threat than the ESS, they are identifying similar issues. This overlap suggests, as the Chairman of the UK's Serious Organised Crime Agency argued, that 'there is a seamless relationship between an internal security strategy and an external one.'²³

Turning briefly to the EU's framing of some specific security challenges it is clear that the internal-external divide is being eroded. In both the ESS and ISS terrorism is a clear example of a security threat that transcends the internal-external divide. The 2005 Counter Terrorism Strategy argues the EU 'is an area of increasing openness, in which the internal and external aspects of security are intimately linked...This is an environment which terrorists abuse to pursue their objectives.'²⁴ Managing regional conflict, while usually seen as a foreign policy issue, requires a range of capabilities beyond the diplomats and military, including: rule of law, civil protection, administrative expertise, aid, trade, and development policy. In this vein the ISS transcends the internal-external divide when it calls for greater cooperation between external (CSDP) and internal (JHA) bodies. Transcending the divide in the opposite direction CSDP's crisis management missions and the prevention of, or response to, state failure are integral to ameliorating internal security threats, such as illegal immigration, organised crime and terrorism. Indeed, the increasingly transnational nature of organised crime creates a dual blurring of internal and external security. The ESS argues 'the

²³ Andrews, Ian, in *European Union Committee - Seventeenth Report: The EU Internal Security Strategy* (May 2011) para. 43

²⁴ Council of the EU, *The European Union Counter Terrorism Strategy* (Brussels, 30 November 2005), p. 6

internal threat to our security has an important external dimension: cross border trafficking in drugs, women, illegal immigrants, and weapons accounts for a large part of the activities of criminal gangs.²⁵ Furthermore, in 2011 the JHA Council called for COSI (Standing Committee on Internal Security) ‘to ensure that these crime priorities are taken into account in other policy areas, particularly in the Unions’ external action.’²⁶ In order to combat the cross-border trafficking of drugs, people, weapons and counterfeit merchandise, internal security policies and agencies have been externalised and external security missions have developed more traditional internal security (policing) features. For example Europol, which was originally established to tackle drug trafficking in Europe, adopted an external strategy in 2004 and quickly widened its remit to other forms of international (primarily organised) crime.²⁷ A move in the opposite direction is the use of CSDP missions to tackle organised crime, originally in the Balkans and more recently in the Sahel and with EUNAVFOR off the coast of Somalia. While EUNAVFOR is a military mission outside the territory of the EU its primary role is to ‘fight piracy and armed robbery’, in other words organised crime. This is explicitly stated in the ESS Implementation Report, which ‘highlighted piracy as a new dimension of organised crime.’²⁸ The EU’s efforts to tackle organised crime illustrate it is an internal and external security challenge, that traditional geographic and bureaucratic distinctions are increasingly problematic, and the capabilities being used affect the nature of the EU as a security provider. Finally, following the 2008 ESS Report cybersecurity is now a prominent challenge for both internal and external security strategies. The EU’s 2013 Cybersecurity Strategy makes clear reference to the dual blurring of internal and external security. The geographic blurring is apparent in the strategy’s argument that ‘the global reach of the Internet means that law enforcement must adopt a coordinated and collaborative cross-border approach’, while bureaucratic blurring is evident in the strategy’s desire that ‘synergies between civilian and military approaches in protecting cyber assets should be enhanced.’²⁹ This framing of security as blurring the internal-external divide, as an emerging security continuum, may undermine the EU’s more normative approach through possible recourse to military capabilities. Yet it also provides an opportunity for the EU to rearticulate its

²⁵ Council of the EU, *A Secure Europe in a Better*, op. cit., p. 4

²⁶ Council of the EU, *Council Conclusions on setting the EU’s priorities for the fight against organised crime between 2011 and 2013*, (Brussels, 10 June 2011)

²⁷ Mounier, Gregory, ‘Civilian Crisis Management and the External Dimension of JHA: Inceptive, Functional and Institutional Similarities’, *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2009), pp. 45-64

²⁸ Council of the EU, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy*, op. cit., p. 8

²⁹ European Commission & High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace* (Brussels, 7 February 2013)

distinctiveness as comprehensive international security provider. However, to successfully do so requires significant adjustments to the practice of EU security.

PRACTICING EU SECURITY

Institutions: Breaking Down Chinese Walls?

The institutional divide between internal and external security in the EU is rooted in the 1992 Treaty on European Union, which established separate pillars for JHA (internal security) and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP - external security). This structure was inevitable as it reflected the member states reluctance to cede sovereignty in security and allowed for intergovernmental decision-making. The separation of JHA and CFSP also mirrored the European state model, which sought to ensure there was a differentiation between the state's monopoly on the use of violence internally (within its borders) and externally (outside of its borders). This led to discrete institutions being responsible for domestic security (the police, judiciary and customs) and foreign security (primarily diplomats and the military) with very different legal bases and contrasting approaches to the use of force.

Under the separate pillars of JHA/AFSJ and CSFP/CSDP a profusion of councils, committees, coordinators and working groups responsible for security issues were established in the Council, Commission and, since 2010, the EEAS. The difficulty has been to coordinate the work of these bodies and develop coherent policies and actions while respecting the distinct competences of each pillar. It is commonly accepted that communication, let alone coordination, between the Commission, Council or EEAS (inter-institutional), and even within DGs or departments (intra-institutional), is problematic.³⁰ Instead what often occurs are turf wars as competing bodies try to ensure their primacy in overlapping policy areas. This means that, institutionally, the EU, like its member states, still has a rather compartmentalised approach to security policy despite the rhetoric on the blurring of internal and external security.

Nevertheless, the launch in 1999 of the AFSJ and CSDP, while separate, sowed the seeds for the dual blurring of internal and external security institutions. In particular, the externalisation of AFSJ since

³⁰ Christiansen, T., 'Intra-Institutional politics and inter-institutional relations in the EU: towards coherent governance?' *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 3, (2001), pp. 747-769

the 1999 Tampere Programme's call for JHA to be able to develop 'stronger external action'³¹ has moved rapidly to tackle security challenges beyond the EU's borders.³² Within CSDP the use of both civilian and military capabilities for crisis management means the bureaucratic divide between internal and external security is less clear cut. As CSDP missions tackle challenges such as terrorism and organised crime the emerging security continuum becomes more apparent; a trend continued under the Lisbon Treaty (LT).

The LT contained a number of reforms designed to enhance consistency and coherence across EU security policy, in theory strengthening the EU as an international security provider. First, the LT gave the EU, not just the EC, a legal personality. This provided the EU with 'authority', in principle, to sign agreement and treaties with third parties across all policy areas, including security. This, however, does not resolve arguments over who within the EU has legal competence for particular security issues. In the past such disputes have been taken to the European Court of Justice; such as the 2004 case between the European Parliament and the Commission over the Passenger Name Record legislation, and the 2005 case between the Council of the EU and the Commission over tackling small arms proliferation in West Africa. With the blurring of internal and external security these types of disputes are likely to increase. Hence, while some international security agreements have been signed, without resolving inter-institutional competition, a single legal personality will not dramatically enhance the EU's security provider role.

Second, the LT reformed the EU's foreign, security and defence policy structures. The LT formally ended the EU's pillar structure (while retaining different decision-making structures), created a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) (who was also Commission Vice-President (VP) for External Affairs), and established the EEAS headed by the HR/VP. The EEAS brought together personnel from the Council, the Commission External Relations DG and member states with the explicit objective of enhancing the EU as an international security provider. The HR and EEAS seek to do this through improving cooperation, coordination, consistency and coherence both between member states and EU security policies and between different EU institutions. However, it is the latter that has been the principal focus, with the HR 'dual-hatted' so that s/he is responsible both for CFSP/CSDP and External Relations in the Commission.

³¹ European Council, *Presidency Conclusions Tampere European Council* (Brussels: 16 October 1999)

³² Monar, Jorg, *The External Dimension of the EU's Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Progress, potential and limitations after the Treaty of Lisbon* (Stockholm: Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, 2012)

Yet, the dual hatting of the HR/VP has not brought greater coherence or consensus on understandings of security between, or even within, the Commission and the EEAS. This creates problems for intra- and inter-institutional cooperation on issues such as the terrorism, energy, organised crime and immigration. These issues are primarily the responsibility of the Commission and there are continuing tensions between those DGs and the EEAS, highlighted during the negotiations establishing the EEAS when several functions of the External Relations DG were moved to other Commission DGs to avoid them being integrated into the EEAS.³³ These fears continue to affect coordination across these security issues. In effect, institutions and departments are often still functioning on a pre-Lisbon basis; with the abolition of the pillar structure more symbolic than practical. Personalities, politics, budgets and bureaucratic inertia all contribute to the perpetuation of an invisible pillar structure. The divisions are encapsulated by turf wars between and within the EEAS, Commission and Council, and by mutual wariness between civilian and military personnel. Hence, despite some institutional changes, much more is needed to make a reality of the CA and avoid institutional disjointedness undermining the EU's 'capacity to act'³⁴ as an international security provider.

Nevertheless, the EEAS has potential to enhance the EU's ability to address the blurring of internal and external security and rearticulate its distinctiveness as a security provider. This was evident in the Commission's ISS in Action, which invited the EEAS to 'exploit synergies between internal and external policies' and argued that 'COSI...and the Political and Security Committee [PSC] should work together and meet regularly.'³⁵ This was followed in 2011 by the Hungarian Presidency calling for the 'tightening of links between external and internal aspects of EU security', including sharing intelligence, incorporating internal security actors in the planning of CSDP missions, integrating threat assessments, training, implementing the solidarity clause and in communicating on EU security with third parties.³⁶ Steps in this direction were taken in June that year with the launch of a 'working method for closer cooperation and coordination in the field of EU security', which focused on two key proposals. First, quarterly inter-institutional meetings between the EEAS, Council and Commission, where representatives from the PSC, COSI, relevant Council and Commission directorates (e.g. justice, home affairs) and other bodies would exchange information; however, the

³³ Author's interviews with EU officials (Brussels, October & December 2013)

³⁴ Rhodes, Carolyn, (ed.), *The European Union in the world community*, (Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1998)

³⁵ European Commission, *The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action*, op. cit., p. 15

³⁶ Council of the EU, *Tightening the Links between External and Internal aspects of Security* (Brussels, 4 February 2011)

meeting would have no decision-making powers.³⁷ Second, the plan advocated joint meetings of preparatory bodies within the Council such as a PSC-COSI meeting, but also possibly: the Committee for Civilian aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) and the COSI support group, Civil Protection and External JHA councillors (JAIEX), the Council working group on terrorism (COTER) and the Terrorism Working Group (TWG) with the counter terrorism coordinator also participating, and JAIEX meeting with geographical preparatory bodies.³⁸ However, despite institutional linkages being created, these meetings have seldom led to any substantive progress in enhancing the EU's capacity to tackle the blurring of internal and external security.³⁹

In the longer term, however, bringing together COSI and the PSC, as well as the establishment of the multi-institutional, cross-sectoral Crisis Platform, could lay the foundations for overcoming the 'institutional fragmentation'⁴⁰ so strongly evident across EU security policymaking. The Crisis Platform, convened by the EEAS, can bring together a range of civilian and military bodies from across the EEAS and, importantly, Commission DGs. While designed to address specific external conflicts or disasters its role in developing the EU's mission in Mali, including a counter-terrorism element, illustrates its potential as a forum for bridging the divide between those institutions tackling internal and external security.⁴¹ Allowing the bodies responsible for internal and external security to coordinate better would help the EU add to, rather than duplicate, member states capacities. This is important for enhancing the EU's legitimacy as an international security provider among its member states and EU citizens. Yet, bringing these bodies closer together also risks raising further serious political sensitivities about accountability, securitisation, and further turf wars. However, if handled judiciously, with appropriate accountability and focused on practical measures, then adjusting institutional structures to address the emerging European security continuum has the potential to enhance the EU's distinctive role as an international security provider. To do would also need greater coordination of EU capabilities, in particular between its civilian and military instruments.

Coordinating Civil-Military Capabilities: Towards a Comprehensive Approach?

³⁷ Council of the EU, *Working Method for Closer Cooperation and Coordination in the field of EU Security* (Brussels, 6 June 2011), p. 3

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4

³⁹ Author's interviews with EU officials (Brussels, September 2014)

⁴⁰ Setter, S., 'Cross-pillar politics: functional unity and institutional fragmentation of EU foreign policies', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 4, (2004), pp. 720-739

⁴¹ Author's interviews with EU officials (Brussels, September 2014)

Like its institutional architecture the security capability profile of the EU has struggled to adapt to the emerging security continuum. Coordination needs to be improved in three areas to enhance the EU's ability to contribute to international security. First, the tools available through the Commission (such as aid, development, conflict prevention and civil protection) need to be better coordinated with the tools available under the CFSP and CSDP. Second, both the Commission and the EEAS could draw more systematically on the instruments and expertise available through JHA, covering police and judicial cooperation. Third, the divisions between civilian and military capabilities also need to be bridged, both within CFSP/CSDP and between CFSP/CSDP and other policy areas.

The traditional understanding of internal and external security capabilities is based on the European state model. This ensured that threats to security from within the borders were tackled by civilian policing and threats to security from outside the borders were managed by the military. While, this distinction was never clear cut, EU security strategies suggest this divide is blurring at the EU level. For example, the Solidarity Clause explicitly calls for the use of military capabilities, if necessary, in preventing and responding to terrorist attacks and natural or man-made disasters within and outside the EU.⁴² This gradual blurring has been coupled with a slow but definite transformation of the role of the security services, police, intelligence bodies and armed forces within states.⁴³ The way CSDP has developed illustrates this transformation and how internal-external distinctions are becoming increasingly cumbersome. Already in 2002 the need to bring together CSDP's civilian (mostly internal) and military (usually external) capabilities was highlighted in a report submitted to the European Convention by the Working Group on Defence. The report suggested the development of a pool of civilian and military civil protection capabilities, which would need to exercise together regularly to improve effectiveness when deployed.⁴⁴ While little came out of this report directly, CSDP has, with varying success, drawn on an expanding range of capabilities from judicial personnel and civilian police, through to strategic airlift and combat troops. However, fully fledged civil-military coordination has remained quite elusive with the CSDP missions in the Horn of Africa being a rare example of relative success.

CSDP operations themselves have further problematized the distinction of the military being used externally and the police internally. In certain extreme circumstances it has always been possible for

⁴² 'Treaty of Lisbon Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union', *Official Journal of the European Union* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2008)

⁴³ For example see: Andreas, P. & Price, R., 'From War fighting to Crime Fighting: Transforming the American National Security State', *International Studies Review* Vol. 3, No. 3, (2001), pp. 31-52

⁴⁴ European Convention WG VIII, *Final Report of Working Group VIII – Defence*, (Brussels, 16 December 2002)

the military (under civilian control) to undertake internal roles. However, this was the exception and developments such as the Solidarity Clause and references to increasing the EU's 'resilience to crises and disasters'⁴⁵ suggests a move towards normalising such exceptions. In parallel, EU internal security capabilities are increasingly operating externally in tackling terrorism and organised crime (e.g. EUCAP Sahel) or in post conflict stabilisation and border management operations (e.g. EUBAM Libya). While the military prefer for police and other agencies to be deployed alongside them, rather than, as happened previously, having to undertake policing roles themselves, this is not always possible. As well as the military performing policing functions there continue to be difficulties in deploying civilian police into volatile post-conflict environments. This blurring of roles suits neither police nor military personnel,⁴⁶ contributing to the increasing use of gendarmerie capabilities. At the European level the agreement on a European Gendarmerie Force (EGF) in 2004 may act as a useful transitional capability between civilian and military capabilities. The 800 strong EGF, which became operational in July 2006, is made up of contributions from six EU states (France, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Spain) and is deployable alongside civilian police, the military, or both. While not an EU capability as such, it will be 'first and foremost at the disposal of the EU' and would in such circumstances be under the political and strategic control of the PSC.⁴⁷ As internal and external security agendas converge gendarmerie forces are of growing importance,⁴⁸ as demonstrated by EGF's deployment within the EU's Operation Althea in Bosnia between November 2007 and October 2010, as well as its role in NATO's mission in Afghanistan since 2009, and its contribution to the UN mission in Haiti in 2010.

A significant move to better coordinate civilian and military capabilities came in late 2008 when the European Council called on the HR to 'establish a new, single civilian-military strategic planning structure for ESDP operations.'⁴⁹ This new structure, known as the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), was designed to merge the strategic planning functions of DG E VIII (military crisis management) and DGE IX (civilian crisis management) as well as incorporating elements of the EU Military Staff's (EUMS) CivMil Cell.⁵⁰ The CMPD was a belated response to the EU's long

⁴⁵ European Commission, *The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action*, op. cit., p. 13

⁴⁶ Hills, Alice, 'The Inherent Limits of Military Forces in Policing Peace Operations', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (2001), pp. 79-98

⁴⁷ *EuroFuture* (2005) 'Substitute Missions in Crisis Management: Interview with Brigadier General Gerard Deanaz, EGF Commander' (Summer 2005), pp. 60-62

⁴⁸ See: Lutterbeck, David, 'Between police and Military: the New Security Agenda and the Rise of gendarmeries', *Cooperation and Conflict* Vol. 39, No. 1, (2004), pp. 45-68

⁴⁹ European Council, *Presidency Conclusions Brussels European Council* (Brussels 12 December 2008), p. 17

⁵⁰ Drent, Margiet & Zandee, Dick, *Breaking Pillars: Towards a Civil-Military Security Approach for the European Union* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' January 2010)

standing claim that ‘none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means’⁵¹ and its commitment ‘to strengthening synergies between its civilian and military crisis management instruments.’⁵² It is also (at least on paper) another step towards comprehensiveness in EU security provision. However, as Manners argues, the introduction, indeed prioritisation, of military capabilities risks undermining the EU’s normative power⁵³ and therefore diminishing its distinctiveness as a security provider.

Given the CA’s focus on external security it is unsurprising that efforts to improve the coordination of capabilities have been mostly *within* the EEAS and CSDP. Yet, in the longer term synergies in capabilities *across* institutions and policy areas are crucial. The EU already accepts that it must enhance its capacity to act externally in order to protect internal security.⁵⁴ As Rees has argued, it is time the EU realises that the inflexible separation of instruments for foreign policy and internal security is no longer appropriate as transnational challenges defy such distinctions.⁵⁵ Such an acknowledgement would enhance the EU’s claims to being an international security provider by strengthening ‘the availability of, and a capacity to utilize, policy instruments.’⁵⁶ The EU has, in principle, available to it the full range of instruments expected of an international security provider, from aid to diplomacy and from economic sanctions to military force. In fact it may be uniquely placed in this regard, thus providing the opportunity to enhance its distinctiveness. Through improving the coordination between capabilities, especially civil-military, it will move closer to fulfilling its ambition to be a distinctive international security provider capable of tackling the complexities of the emerging European security continuum.

PROVIDING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY?

The emerging European security continuum has been partly driven by changes in the nature of threats. However, it has also been significantly driven by changes in threat perception, by the EU’s security discourse, and its efforts to adapt its institutions and capabilities. Hence, the politics and practice of providing security are as important in shaping the security continuum as the actual

⁵¹ Council of the EU, *A Secure Europe in a Better*, op. cit., p. 7

⁵² European Council, *Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of ESDP*, (18 June 2004), p. 5

⁵³ Manners, Ian, ‘Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2, (2006) pp. 182-199

⁵⁴ Council of the EU, *Draft Internal Security Strategy*, op. cit.

⁵⁵ Rees, Wyn, ‘Inside Out: the External Face of EU Internal Security Policy’, *European Integration*, Vol. 30, No. 1, (2008), pp. 97-111

⁵⁶ Bretherton, Charlotte & Volger, John, *The European Union as a Global Actor* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 30

threats. Politics and practice also influence the prospects for nature of the EU as an international security provider.

The first section of the article argued that the blurring of internal and external security in the EU's security discourse provides an opportunity to rearticulate its distinctiveness as an international security provider. The EU's Cybersecurity Strategy illustrates the EU's potential to provide a comprehensive approach to security, combining internal and external challenges, institutions and capabilities. This strategy drew from departments across the EEAS (Global Affairs, Directorate K (security policy) and the EUMS) and Commission (DG HOME and DG CNECT), spanning the challenges of cybercrime, cybersecurity and cyber-defence. However, negotiating such a comprehensive strategy was complicated by significant institutional differences, to the extent that the strategy almost became a solely CFSP communication.⁵⁷ This would have undermined the comprehensiveness, distinctiveness, and added value the EU could bring to tackling this security challenge. It would have also failed to understand the multifaceted and intertwined nature of cyber security/crime/defence, which transcends the internal-external divide both geographically and bureaucratically. Similarly, the development of the EU Maritime Security Strategy involved internal and external, civilian and military bodies from the EEAS (EUMS, Directorate K, and CMPD) and Commission (DG MARE and DG MOVE). Another example of the potential of the EU to bring together internal and external security actors is the aforementioned Crisis Platform, which has generally been seen to have been beneficial in, at the very least, bringing the relevant institutions, directorates and units together.⁵⁸ If only to exchange information this already improves coordination and is the first step towards a comprehensive approach to security. These strategies and developments, and the institutional frictions they overcame, illustrate that the CA might be securing a foothold within the EU's nascent security culture, thereby enhancing the EU's distinctiveness as a multifaceted international security provider.

Finally, the 2013 Joint Communication from the EEAS and Commission on the Comprehensive Approach provides an opportunity to better address the emerging security continuum. While it focuses on 'external conflict and crises' it does so as a way of mitigating 'the negative effects – for the EU, its citizens and its internal security – of insecurity and conflict elsewhere.'⁵⁹ The

⁵⁷ Author's Interviews with EU Officials (Brussels, October-December 2013)

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ European Commission & High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security (2013) *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises* (Brussels, 11 December)

communication has an entire section devoted to ‘linking policies and internal and external action’, which highlights that ‘EU internal policies and actions can have significant external effects...likewise, external action and policy can also impact on EU internal dynamics.’⁶⁰ In the longer term it might be worth considering a comprehensive approach that brings together internal and external security. Such an approach would be beneficial for two reasons. First, the nature of the threats and challenges identified by the EU are increasingly transboundary; occurring inside and outside the EU and requiring a range of different institutions and capabilities to tackle them. Second, such a comprehensive approach would provide a platform for overcoming the EU’s institutional stove-piping, bureaucratic turf wars, and divergent security cultures. There are significant difficulties and dangers in trying to develop such an all-encompassing approach, but not doing so might be problematic given the emerging security continuum. It would also be a missed opportunity to rearticulate the EU’s distinctiveness as a security provider.

Despite the opportunities presented by the emerging security continuum, as the second section of the article outlined, inter- and intra-institutional turf wars are a major practical obstacle limiting the potential of the EU to fulfil its potential as distinctive international security provider. In addition to the practical obstacles discussed above, a number of normative and conceptual problems may also inhibit the EU. First, despite the Joint Communication on the Comprehensive Approach, different understandings of what the CA actually implies persist. Even within institutions, such as the EEAS, there are differences about how the CA should be pursued, what the best institutional arrangements are, and what capabilities are best suited to particular security challenges.⁶¹ Within these discussions, the availability, role, and use of military instruments within the CA are particularly contentious. The key is to be able to select and coordinate the most appropriate tools for a particular security challenge, whether they are from within the EEAS, the Commission or both. For example, the proliferation of WMD is an important issue for CFSP,⁶² but the Commission through its TACIS programme in the Former Soviet Union has also pursued non-proliferation. Yet, even after the LT and the Joint Communication on the CA, these two approaches, while nominally linked through the HR/VP, are still not particularly well coordinated.

The second conceptual challenge is the different understandings of security across the EU. Without a reasonably common definition of security it is difficult, Kirchner argues, to assess whether the EU

⁶⁰ European Commission & High Representative, *Joint Communication*, *op. cit.*

⁶¹ Author’s interview with EU officials (Brussels, October & December 2013)

⁶² Council of the EU, *EU Strategy Against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Brussels, 10 December 2003)

can be a security provider.⁶³ While EU security strategies overlap in their threat assessments there remain differences over priorities, approaches, and even whether some challenges are (or should) be considered and addressed as security issues. There is a longstanding debate, within academia and the EU, about the advantages and dangers of ‘securitising’ policy issues.⁶⁴ In the EU this is related to turf wars over which institution has responsibility for which issue and, therefore, over how it is framed. This can be seen in the Commission’s securitisation rhetoric and technologies in policy areas such as immigration, organised crime and border control. Yet other branches of the Commission, such as DG ECHO (Humanitarian Aid), fiercely resist securitisation. DG ECHO is adamant humanitarian aid should be neutral, impartial, and independent focusing on humanitarian need.⁶⁵ For DG ECHO security is framed as human security. Hence, it is important not to be seen as part of the actions of the EEAS or other parts of the Commission, while recognising ECHO’s role and contributing to the CA. It does so through the mantra of “in but out”, whereby they aim to be part of the “overall effect” through coordination and collaboration but ensure the principles of neutrality and the humanitarian needs based approach remain.⁶⁶ This effort to ensure neutrality, and, crucially the perception of neutrality, has been complicated by the introduction of an EEAS Crisis Response department, with a responsibility for the overall planning, organisation and coordination of crisis related activities. This overlaps with both the civil protection and humanitarian aid remit of ECHO, creating significant institutional friction and potentially undermining the distinctiveness of EU security provision.

This friction is exacerbated by the EEAS Situation Room replicating some of the functions of DG ECHO’s Emergency Response Centre (ERC) and was heightened further by the suggestion in the 2013 EEAS Review that the Situation Room should be co-located with the ERC.⁶⁷ Creating a single 24/7 ERC has the potential to streamline capabilities, reduce duplication (and therefore costs) and, in the spirit of the CA, bring increased coordination. However, it would also be seen as infringing on the impartiality and neutrality of DG ECHO as it would potentially put military personnel (or at least personnel with a defence remit) inside the Commission (those ‘Watchkeeper’ staff which were in the EUMS and are now co-located in the Situation Room). This raises concerns about the securitisation and militarisation of crises, while also antagonising the EUMS who highly value the Watchkeeper

⁶³ Kirchner, Emil, ‘The Challenge of European Union Security Governance’, Op. Cit., p. 952

⁶⁴ See: Buzan, Barry, De Wilde, Japp & Waever, Ole, *Security: A new framework for analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), and, Balzacq, Thierry, *Securitisation Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve* (London: Routledge, 2010)

⁶⁵ Author’s Interviews with EU Officials (Brussels, October-December 2013)

⁶⁶ Author’s Interviews with EU Officials (Brussels, October & December 2013)

⁶⁷ Ashton, Catherine, *EEAS Review* (Brussels: European External Action Service, July 2013)

capability.⁶⁸ More practically, it raises difficulties in terms of the size of the facility and its lack of secure communications. Finally, such a move would not enhance coordination with DG HOME's crisis room, which focuses on internal security. While the institutional battles could, eventually, be worked through, the fundamental differences in understandings of security will be harder to overcome. It would move the EU away from the human security approach, thereby affecting the distinctive nature of the EU as an international security provider.

Differing conceptions of security would also come to the fore if, as the EEAS Review calls for, the EEAS was to 'reinforce its capacity' to deal with issues such as energy security, environmental protection and climate change, migration, and counter terrorism. These policy areas are primarily the responsibility of the Commission and there are heated debates (even within the EEAS) over the value of enhancing the EEAS' capacity to address these issues.⁶⁹ Instead, as the Commission has the expertise and resourcing, the focus should be on improving communication, cooperation and coordination between the EEAS and the Commission; something the dual hatting of the HR/VP did not really facilitate under the first HR/VP Catherine Ashton.⁷⁰ Initial signs are that the new HR/VP, Federica Mogherini, is seeking to prioritise enhancing the EEAS-Commission relationship. In particular, including the former Director General of the Commission's DG HOME, Stefano Manservigi, as her Chef de Cabinet may facilitate greater coordination between internal and external security.⁷¹

More fundamentally, moving these policy areas, if only in part, into the EEAS has the potential to reshape the normative basis of the EU as an international security provider. With immigration policy heavily securitised, the EU is often perceived as being less interested in the plight of the migrants (milieu goals or human security) than the domestic politics of its member states (strategic interests or possession goals). With the migration crisis in the Mediterranean escalating and Frontex's Triton mission off the coast of Italy being criticised for its small size and focus on border control rather than search and rescue, the pressures on the normative approach of the EU are intensifying. Operation Triton seems to reinforce the image of fortress Europe with navy and air force assets seen to be protecting the interests of EU security rather than acting in the interests of human security. This undermines the EU's desire to be seen as a distinctive normative security provider acting as a 'force for good' on the international stage.

⁶⁸ Author's interviews with EU officials (Brussels, October & December 2013)

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Authors interviews with EU officials (Brussels, October-December 2013 & September 2014).

⁷¹ Authors interviews with EU officials (Brussels, September 2014).

The emerging European security continuum, while opening up opportunities for the EU to assert itself as a security provider, is likely to reshape these normative conceptualisations. If an internal-external security nexus exists then a seemingly logical response is to ensure greater cooperation, coordination and even integration of the EU's internal and external institutions and capabilities. However, the consequences of such developments have drawn criticism from a number of scholars, such as Dider Bigo.⁷² The central concern relates to the issue of the securitisation and even militarisation of policies that should remain in the realm of 'normal politics' and can lead to 'exceptional' security measures becoming the norm.⁷³ It is not just the EU discourse that securitises policy areas, the EU's security instruments and technologies are, as Balzacq argues, at least as important.⁷⁴ These developments challenge the perception of the EU as a distinctive security provider with more (although not entirely) benign motivations. It is difficult to make a case for the EU as distinctive civilian, normative or ethical power while its approaches to managing immigration are interpreted as reinforcing notions of 'fortress Europe' and its counter-terrorism policies are criticised for emphasising security over justice and liberty.

Similarly, having access to a range of coercive instruments (not just military) may undermine notions of the EU as a normative power, focused on human security.⁷⁵ While there are debates about means and ends, the overall perception (from within and outside of the EU) is that as the EU engages with an expanding array of security issues, utilising an increasingly interconnected range of instruments, its distinctiveness as a normative power (if it is) is in danger of being undermined. A number of scholars, such as Karen Smith and Ian Manners, raise concerns that developing a military capability negates the EU's claims to being a civilian or normative power.⁷⁶ While it is difficult to argue that CSDP has militarised the EU, securitisation has occurred, but driven more by the Commission's internal security agenda than the EEAS's external agenda. This is supported in other policy areas by scholars, such as Hette and Soderbaum, who suggested that the EU is moving towards a 'soft

⁷² Bigo, Dider 'When two become one: Internal and External securitisations in Europe.' In Kelstrup, M. and Williams, M. (eds.) *International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration: Power, Security and Community* (London: Routledge, 2000)

⁷³ See: Neal, Andrew, *Exceptionalism and the Politics of Counter-Terrorism: Liberty, Security and the War on Terror* (London: Routledge, 2009); Huysmans, Jef, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (London: Routledge, 2006)

⁷⁴ Balzacq, Thierry, 'The Policy Tools of Securitisation: Information Exchange, EU Foreign and Interior Policies', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (2008), pp. 75-100

⁷⁵ For more on EU and Human Security see: Galius, Marlies & Kaldor, Mary, *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe: Projects, principles and practicalities* (London: Routledge, 2008)

⁷⁶ Smith, Karen, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. (Oxford: Polity, 2003); Manners, Ian, 'Normative Power Europe reconsidered: Op. Cit.

imperialism' through the more coercive use of conditionality in its enlargement and neighbourhood strategies, undermining its civilian and normative power claims,⁷⁷ and, therefore, its distinctiveness. Similarly, as the EU identifies and engages with this emerging security continuum, the interchanging use of civilian, gendarmerie and military capabilities to tackle issues such as organised crime, immigration, civil protection and terrorism risks the perception of the EU shifting away from its more benign, civilian or normative characteristics.

A final possible implication of the eroding internal-external security divide is that calls for greater coordination and even integration of committees, working groups and institutions, raise significant questions about oversight, accountability, legitimacy and transparency. In particular it becomes increasingly problematic to maintain oversight and clear lines of accountability as the formal and informal networks of agencies, institutions, experts and working groups expand. For example, Europol, an EU agency, explicitly operates as a network structure,⁷⁸ both within the EU (Frontex), but also increasingly with third countries (the USA) and organisations (the UN Office on Drugs and Crime). In addition, the numerous agencies providing information to Europol have their own networks so tracing the origins of information or keeping track of who uses the data Europol collates, and how, becomes very difficult. These developments, often leading to a more opaque network of security actors, can undermine perceptions about the legitimacy of EU as an international security provider.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that the EU's discourse on the blurring of internal and external security is a significant factor shaping the potential for, and understandings of, the EU as an international security provider. Its importance is not just for the EU's institutional architecture and capability profile, but also for its enduring ambition to be a distinctive (normative) international security provider. Being distinct is important for the EU in at least two ways. First, institutional distinctiveness is, according to Jupille and Caporaso, crucial for, 'autonomy.'⁷⁹ Distinctiveness is essential in differentiating the EU from other potential security providers such as the UN, NATO, AU, or OSCE, as well as from the so called great and rising powers, such as the US, China, Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa.

⁷⁷ Hettne, B & Soderbaum, F., 'Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism: The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (2005), pp. 535-552

⁷⁸ See: Hillebrand, Claudia, *Counter-terrorism Networks in the European Union: Maintaining Democratic Legitimacy after 9/11* (Oxford: OUP, 2012)

⁷⁹ Jupille, J. & Caporaso, J.A., 'States, Agency and Rules: The European Union in Global Environmental Politics', in Rhodes, C. *The European Union in the World Community* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998)

With an emerging security continuum the potential for the EU to draw on a wide range of capabilities through the CA, could be the basis for a rearticulated (practical) distinctiveness as an international security provider. Few other international organisations have the potential of the EU for a genuinely comprehensive approach to the challenges of international security. Despite the obstacles, its faults and its mistakes, the EU is still, in parts of the world, the preferred or only security provider that is willing to become involved.

Second, distinctiveness is important normatively. The EU has long identified itself as a civilian or normative power, especially in its contributions to international security. For example Bailes has argued that CSDP could be described as ‘do-gooding’,⁸⁰ running missions for the benefit of others rather than itself. However, increasingly CSDP missions, such as capacity building to tackle organised crime and terrorism in the Sahel, anti-piracy in the Indian Ocean or border assistance in Moldova and Libya, are clearly defined in terms of EU strategic and security interests. This has implications for the EU’s normative or ‘force for good’ rationale, placing, as Merlingen argues, strategic interests above normative ones.⁸¹ Pursuing EU interests and normative distinctiveness are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The missions mentioned above are also in the interests of the states, regions and populations within which they operate. However, the perception created both within and outside of the EU, is of interests trumping normative aspirations. This pushes the EU in a direction that undermines its self-identification as a distinctive international security provider, more influenced by normative milieu goals than possession goals.

To conclude, the emerging European security continuum impacts on the EU as an international security provider in three ways. First, it provides opportunity. The EU’s range of instruments (at least on paper) gives it the potential for much greater agency and for rearticulating its distinctiveness in a practical and pragmatic way as possibly the only organisation with genuine potential to become a comprehensive security provider. This would, in turn, allow it to provide the ‘added value’ so often sought by member states. Second, it creates obstacles. The continuing political tensions, machinations, and turf wars within the Brussels bureaucracy and/or between the member states undermines the EU’s ability to act comprehensively and to redesign its institutions and capabilities to better address the blurring of internal and external security. Third, the European security continuum, and the EU’s rhetorical, institutional and technological responses to it, has a more fundamental

⁸⁰ Bailes, Alyson, ‘The EU and a ‘better World’: What Role for the European Security and Defence Policy?’, *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 1, (2008), pp. 115-30

⁸¹ Merlingen, Michael, ‘Everything is Dangerous: A Critique of ‘Normative Power Europe’, *Security Dialogue*, Vol., 38, No.4 (2007), pp. 435-53

implication for the EU as an international security provider. As internal and external threats become, at least rhetorically, conflated the EU is increasingly framing its role in international security as indispensable for protecting the EU, its member states and its citizens. This moves the EU away from its normative power self-image with a responsibility to act as a 'force of good' in the world. The European security continuum might be reorienting the EU towards pursuing Wolfers' possession goals rather than milieu goals.⁸²

The European security continuum, therefore, provides an opportunity both practically and normatively to carve out a distinctive, comprehensive role for the EU as an international security provider. Yet, the obstacles of institutional and capability coordination mean this ambition is still some way off being realised and, more profoundly, the notion of the EU's distinctiveness as a normative power focused on 'milieu goals' is in danger of being seriously undermined.

⁸² Wolfers, Arnold, *Discord and Collaboration*, *Op. Cit.*